SPECIAL PROJECTS ANNOUNCEMENT

Competition: Undergraduate Population and Ecosystem Dynamics Workshop

Application due date: May 22, 2018

Eligibility: All Sea Grant Programs are eligible to apply. Other interested parties are encouraged to work with their local Sea Grant Program to prepare an application that can be submitted via the Sea Grant Program.

Maximum request: Applicants may request up to $140,000 in Federal funds.

Matching funds: Matching funds are *not* required for this competition.

Project start and end date: Project should begin no earlier than October 1, 2018, and should be completed no later than September 30, 2019.

The National Sea Grant Office (NSGO), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and the NOAA Office of Education (OEd) anticipate that up to $140,000 will be available to fund a one-year cooperative agreement, to develop, conduct, and evaluate one to several Undergraduate Population and Ecosystem Dynamics Workshops, to be held between October 1, 2018 and September 30, 2019.

Background:

Surveys of the nation's workforce needs continually indicate the need for professionals in the field of population and ecosystem dynamics (PED). Professionals in this field develop and implement quantitative methods for assessing the status of fish stocks and other marine resources and the ecosystems they inhabit.

The purpose of the proposed undergraduate workshop(s) is to introduce and recruit students into the field of PED. This program fits within the National Sea Grant College Program's 2018-2021 Strategic Plan under the focus areas of Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture and Environmental Literacy and Workforce Management.

Participants:

Ideal candidates for the workshop(s) are undergraduate students with outstanding quantitative skills and an interest in the environmental sciences. Candidates will be selected nationwide, regardless of awardee location.

Workshop:

Applicants should propose a program of one or more workshops, with no less than 20 undergraduate students selected (e.g., one workshop for a minimum of 20 students or

two workshops for a minimum of 10 students). Each workshop should last 1-2 weeks and be conducted between October 1, 2018, and September 30, 2019.

Workshops would be taught by a combination of university faculty and NMFS scientists. Workshops may contain but are not limited to, a combination of lectures; computer exercises; field trips; a career question and answer panel; and social activities. Applicants should propose to use grant funds to pay for student travel and expenses associated with the workshop. Grant funds may also cover, but are not limited to, expenses such as faculty time, time for an administrative assistant to work on logistics, faculty travel, and other related costs.

An evaluation of the workshop program is also required. Applicants should identify the evaluation strategies they propose to use.

Cooperative Agreement:

The award will be in the form of a Cooperative Agreement with NOAA. The awardee will work closely with the NOAA Program Officer throughout the process in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the workshop(s). NOAA will provide scientists from NMFS to serve as co-instructors at the workshop. NOAA will pay for all expenses related to oversight by the Program Officer and participation by NMFS Scientists outside the budget of the grant.

NOAA is dedicated to seeking diversity in the nation's workforce development and expects the awarded project to incorporate robust strategies to broaden participation by students from groups traditionally underrepresented in fisheries science. To help accomplish this, the Awardee is expected to work closely with NOAA's Living Marine Resources Cooperative Science Center (LMRCSC - https://www.umes.edu/lmrcsc/), an educational partnership program for minority-serving institutions, in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the workshop. This should include:

- Developing student recruiting strategies;
- Creating the student application;
- Evaluating student applications;
- Creating the workshop syllabus;
- Co-teaching the workshop;
- Developing workshop evaluation tools; and
- Allowing the attendance of 1-3 students from LMRCSC-affiliated institutions, with their expenses paid by the LMRCSC, outside the budget of the grant. This does not preclude the acceptance of additional students from the LMRCSC or other minority-serving institutions paid for by the grant.

Applicant Evaluation Criteria:

The following Evaluation Criteria will be used in selecting an applicant as a Grantee. Note that these criteria are different than the Evaluation Criteria laid out in the Special Projects Funding Opportunity announcement.

1. **Technical Merit (40%):** This measures whether the approach is technically sound, if the methods are appropriate, and whether there are clear project objectives consistent with the stated goals of this competition.

2. **Overall Qualification of Applicants (30%):** This evaluates whether the applicant possesses the necessary education, experience, training, facilities, and administrative resources to accomplish the project.

3. **Project Costs (30%):** The budget is analyzed to see if it is realistic, commensurate with the project needs and timeframe, and cost-effective (whether the proposal makes the most economical use of available resources to maximize project results).

More information:

Consult the Federal Funding Opportunity NOAA-OAR-SG-2018-2005457, available at Grants.gov, for
eligible applicants, required elements of the application, how to submit, general programmatic priorities
and selection factors, and other necessary information. Submit your application to SPECIAL PROJECTS
"B" under this Opportunity in grants.gov.

For more information on this competition, including working with Sea Grant programs to prepare an application, working with NMFS to select and engage NMFS scientists, or working with LMRCSC, please contact oar.hq.sg.competitions@noaa.gov. Please put "attention: PED workshop" in the email subject line.

More information can also be found in the "Frequently Asked Questions" located at: https://seagrant.noaa.gov/insideseagrant/Funding-Opportunities. This document will be continually updated with questions received that are of general interest to prospective applicants.

A webinar will be held to describe the funding opportunity and to answer questions pertaining to it on Tuesday, April 24th 2018 at 3:00pm EDT. The link to register and join is: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3984566756926645763

Possible Future PED Workshop Competitions:

Although this announcement is for a one-year cooperative agreement for undergraduate PED workshops held in FY 2019, it is anticipated that similar competitions for cooperative agreements for future undergraduate PED workshops will be conducted annually (pending availability of funding).

In future years, NOAA's goal is to rotate the workshop cooperative agreement regionally, based on the states and territories covered by the NMFS' Science Centers. The annual rotation of host programs ensures geographic balance and diversity of expertise for this as a workforce development training program. Applicants from all regions are eligible to apply to this FY 2019 competition. If a competition is held next year, it is anticipated that applicants from all regions *except* the region of this year's awardee will be eligible. Similarly, in the following years, it is anticipated that applicants from all regions except those of awardees from the previous three years would be eligible.

The regions, and their corresponding Sea Grant programs and Fisheries Science Centers (FSC), are:

- CT, DE, MD, ME, MIT, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VA, WHOI (the Northeast FSC);
- FL, GA, LA, MS-AL, NC, PR, SC, TX (the Southeast FSC);
- CA, USC (the Southwest FSC);
- OR, WA (the Northwest FSC);
- AK (the Alaska FSC);
- GUAM, HI (Pacific Islands FSC); and
- IL-IN, OH, Lake Champlain, MI, MN, NY, PA, WI (the Great Lakes with no corresponding FSC).

(Note that PA and NY are listed under both the Northeast and Great Lakes regions, as they have mandates with each.)